

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated December 7, 2009, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Applicants appreciate and thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the March 5, 2010, telephone interview with the Examiner. The substance of the interview is set forth below and constitutes a record of the interview.

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. Claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, and 14-19 were previously canceled. No claims are added. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 5, 8-10, and 13 are currently pending. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 1 has been amended to obviate the rejection.

Claims 1-2, 5, 8-10, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Publication No. DE 196 50 861 to Sassone (hereinafter "Sassone") in view of Publication No. DE 37 28 608 to Riller et al. (hereinafter "Riller"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, among other features, a filler is injected only in the inner case to encompass the connecting portion.

Sassone does not disclose or suggest the above-noted feature of claim 1. The Office Action at page 3 makes the following assertion: Sassone teaches...[a]n inner case case (coat body 30) encloses the connecting portion.... However, this is not the same as a filler injected only in the inner case to encompass the connecting portion.

That is, Sassone discloses that a thermoplastic material which forms the body 30 is sprayed on the housing 2A. See page 3 of the English language translation of Sassone. As shown in Fig. 6 of Sassone, there is no inner case. Rather the thermoplastic material is sprayed on the housing 2A until it covers the housing 2A, terminal ends 37, and electromagnetics.

An object of the claimed invention is to reduce an amount of filler being used. In Sassone, the amount of thermoplastic being used cannot be controlled because there is no case to contain the thermoplastic. Simply put, Sassone does not disclose an inner case, where a filler is injected only in the inner case.

The Office Action at page 3 asserts that Riller teaches an outer case which surrounds an inner case and an outer case. Because Riller is in the German language, Applicants cannot verify whether Fig. 2 of Riller does indeed disclose an inner case and an outer case. However, in arguendo, if Riller discloses an inner case and an outer case, it is not clear whether the shaded portion of the inside of the inner case is a filler.

The Office has the *prima facie* burden of proving that the shaded portion of the inside of the inner case is a filler. Accordingly, Applicants take a position that Riller does not disclose a filler is injected only in the inner case.

Moreover, the combination of Sassone and Riller does not disclose or suggest a filler is injected only in the inner case.

Sassone discloses spraying thermoplastic on a surface, for example, housing 2A. In arguendo, Riller discloses an inner casing. However, based on the disclosures of Sassone and Riller, one would not know how to spray Sassone's thermoplastic into Riller's inner case.

Furthermore, claim 1 recites the valves are accommodated in a space within the outer case partitioned by the inner space (first space). The connecting portion is enclosed in an inner case (second space).

In contrast, in Sassone, both the terminal ends 37 and the electromagnetics are encased by a single coating of thermoplastic. In Riller, the valve and the wire are both within the asserted inner case. Thus, both Sassone and Riller fail to disclose or suggest the above-noted feature of claim 1.

Isolating the connecting portion in an inner casing provides many benefits and advantages such as isolating from valves that may potentially leak water. As paragraph [32] of the specification reveals, water coming in contact with the connecting portion may cause current leakage.

For at least the reasons as discussed above, claim 1 is allowable over Sassone in view of Riller.

Claims 1-2, 5, 8-10, and 13 are at least patentable by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

CONCLUSION

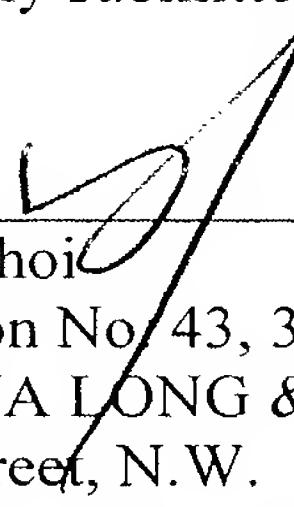
The application is in condition for allowance. Early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

Respectfully submitted,

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